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Jack Anderson and Les Whitten

CIA Withheld Data in JFK Probe

After President John F. Kennedy was struck down on Nov. 22, 1963, the Central Intelligence Agency received evidence suggesting that Cuban Premier Fidel Castro arranged the assassination in retaliation for attempts on his life.

Yet sources privy to the secret discussions at the highest levels of the CIA during those hectic days now tell us that the CIA deliberately withheld the evidence from the Warren Commission investigating Kennedy's death.

Our sources cite two reasons for holding back this evidence. One was a resolve to cover up the secret that the CIA had enlisted Mafia mobsters to kill Castro.

There also was a legitimate concern that the Castro revelations might inflame the American people, whose grief could have turned into a terrible wrath that might have precipitated some rash action.

Only a few key people knew about the CIA plot to assassinate Castro. One was Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, who was his brother's personal watchdog over the CIA. It has now been established that Robert Kennedy was briefed on May 7, 1962, about the attempt to use underworld killers to knock off Castro.

Two days later, Robert Kennedy cautioned the CIA not to go ahead with the assassination without consulting him. Since Robert Kennedy rode herd on the CIA, it must be assumed that he was kept advised of subsequent assassination attempts. However, there is no documentary evidence of this.

Records now available show that Robert Kennedy informed FBI chief J. Edgar Hoover of the plot on May 10, 1962. Yet neither Kennedy nor Hoover later divulged this important information to the Warren Commission.

Of course, various CIA officials also knew about the assassination scheme. Not the least of them was the late CIA chief Allen W. Dulles, who approved the original plan. He later served on the Warren Commmission, yet he sat silently throughout the investigation without mentioning the Cuban angle.

Within hours of President Kennedy's death, the U.S. embassy cabled information from Mexico City suggesting that the Cubans may have been behind the assassination. Our sources say that the CIA developed similar information in Washington.

The first person to reach Robert Kennedy's side after the shooting was CIA Director John A. McCone, who remained alone with the Attorney General at his McLean, Va., home for nearly three hours.

McCone swore to us that Castro's name was never mentioned during the three hours. But CIA records show that the next day McCone not only mentioned Castro to the new President, Lyndon B. Johnson, but briefed him on the information from Mexico City.

Yet no one brought the Cuban connection to the attention of the Warren Commission. We were the first to get word of the anti-Castro plot to Chief Justice Earl Warren, the commission chairman, four years later.

We are now free to reveal our role in the drama. Two of our confidential sources, CIA agent William Harvey and mobster John Rosselli, are dead. A third source, attorney Edward P. Morgan, has waived the confidentiality w had promised him.

Morgan told us in January, 196 about the CIA-Mafia assassination pl against Castro. He raised the possibi ity that the plot could have backfire against President Kennedy. The were suspicious circumstances, I pointed out, indicating that Castr may have learned of the attempts o his life and may have retaliate against Kennedy.

Morgan refused to identify h sources because it would have violat the attorney-client privilege. But h was an attorney of such stature th we didn't doubt his word. He had bee chief inspector of the FBI. He had d rected the historic congressional inve tigation of the Pearl Harbor bombin Later, he ran the investigation into th excesses of the late Sen. Joseph McC thy.

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On March 7, 1967, we reported ne details. "A reported CIA plan in 1963 assassinate Cuba's Fidel Castro," wrote. ". . . may have resulted in counterplot by Castro to assassin President Kennedy."

(1) Is this true

(2) who is he?

(15)

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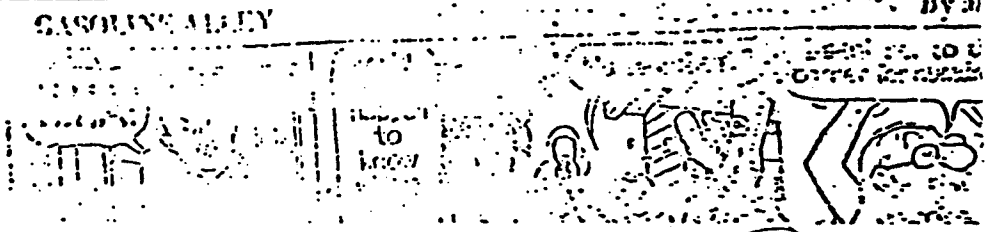
By Howard

DROPOUTS

By M

GASOLINE ALLEY



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